

Burl Ives

"Mrs. McGrath"

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Burl Ives - Mrs. McGrath

"Now, Mrs. McGrath," the sergeant said,
"Would you like to make a soldier
Out of your son, Ted?
With a scarlet cloak and a fine cocked hat,
Mrs. McGrath wouldn't you like that?"

Mrs. McGrath lived on the seashore
For the span of seven long years or more
'Till she saw big ship sailing into the bay
Saying, "Here's my son Ted! Won't you clear the way!"

"Oh, Captain dear, where have you been.
Have you been out sailin' on the Mediterreen'.
Tell me the news of my son Ted.
Is the poor boy livin' or is he dead?"

Now up comes Ted without any legs
And in their place he has two wooden pegs
She kissed him a dozen times or two
Saying "Holly Molly! Sure, it couldn't be you?"

"Now was you drunk or was you blind
When you left your two fine legs behind?
Or was it out walking upon the sea
That tore your legs from the ground to the knee?"

"No I wasn't drunk and I wasn't blind
When I left my two fine legs behind.
For a cannon ball on the fifth of May
Took my two fine legs from the knees away."

"Now Teddy me boy," the old widow cried
"Your two fine legs was your mama's pride
Them stumps of a tree won't do at all
Why didn't you run from the big cannon ball?"

"Now against all war, I do profrain
Between Don Juan and the King of Spain
And, by herrons, I'll make 'em rue the time

When they swept the legs from a child of mine."

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